The Nature of Sound



National Park Service

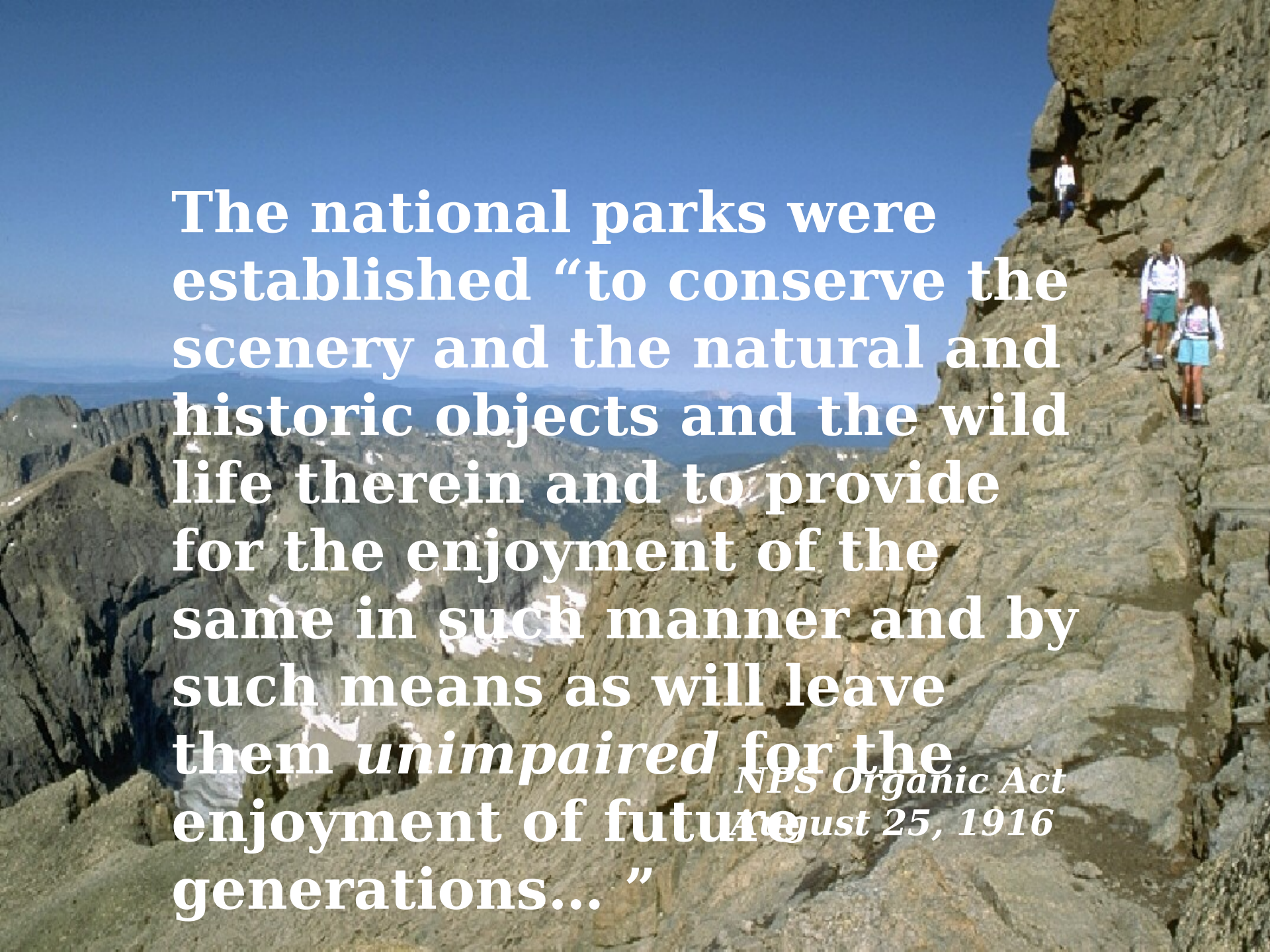
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“All the sounds of the earth are like music.”

Oscar Hammerstein II


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The national parks were established "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them *unimpaired* for the enjoyment of future generations… "

NPS Organic Act
August 25, 1916


“Silence must be comprehended as not solely the absence of sound. It is the natural environment for serenity and contemplation.”
Norman Cousins, author

Natural Soundscapes

Listen to the Everglades



© Pat Holleran photo of Everglades

National Park Soundscap

NPS Policy

The National Park Service strives to preserve resources and values such as natural quiet and natural sounds associated with the physical and biological resources of the parks (the sounds of wind in the trees or of the waves breaking on the shore, the howl of the wolf, or the call of a loon).

Noise Sources in NPS Area

What noises do you hear in national parks?



Cars, buses, other vehicles



Airplanes and Helicopters

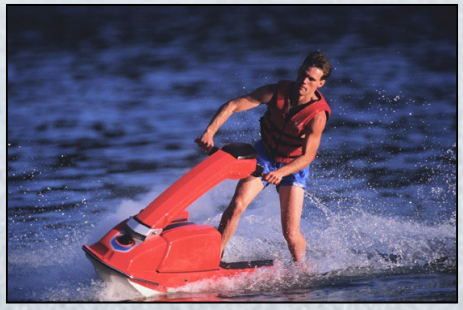


Snowmobiles



NPS Maintenance Equipment





Watercraft

Sound Level Comparison

Park Setting: Listen to the Southwest Desert



Organ Pipe Cactus N.M. © D. Liggett

NPS Resources Manage

MD-900 Explorer Quiet Technology Helicopter



Grand Canyon National Park is reducing noise from NPS aviation use by flying an MD-900 Explorer NOTAR (No TAil Rotor) helicopter for park operations. In addition, area tour operators are joining NPS efforts to implement quiet technology and restore natural quiet.

© Ken Phillips

NPS Sites and Sounds

Stop and Listen

Complete park experiences feature sights *and* sounds.

Find a place to appreciate the sounds of nature on your next park visit and try to understand how your own presence affects natural sound environments.



NPS Sites and Sounds

What will your next national park visit sound like?







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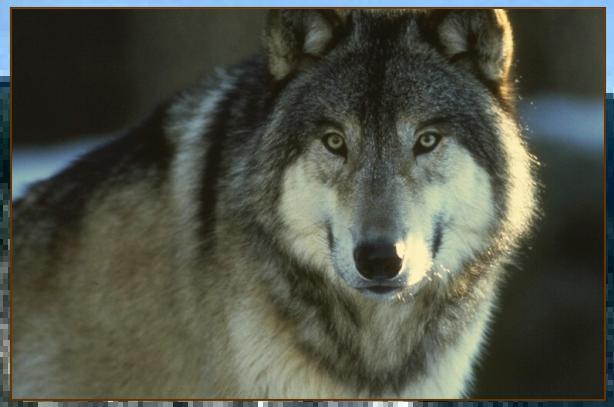
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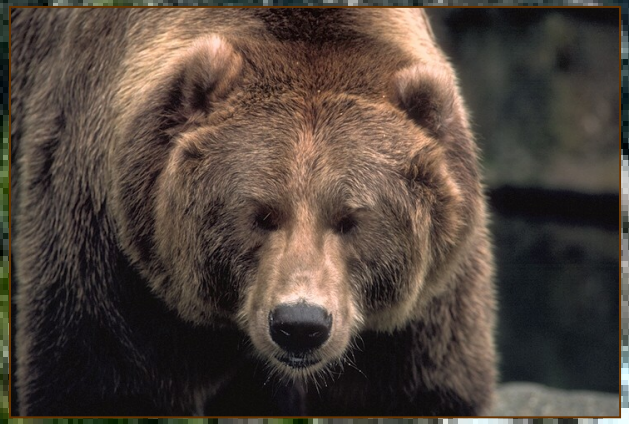














© Pat Holleran photo of Yellowstone Falls


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